



Tower of Strength

Annette Lyon

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It was 1877 when Tabitha Hall Chadwick left Manti as a young bride. Now, nearly seven years later, she returns as a widow with her young son to make a new beginning. Tabitha's strained relationship with her mother-in-law adds more difficulty to her life as a single working mother. Yet with a stroke of courage, Tabitha makes two purchases that become her passions: the local newspaper business and a traumatized horse. As she struggles to meet the challenges of her new roles, Tabitha welcomes the friendship of Samuel, a recently widowed British immigrant. Working together to train the abused horse, the two discover a second chance at love. But when Samuel is critically injured during the construction of the Manti Temple, Tabitha faces the pain of old wounds and the risk of new ones. Weaving themes of loss and renewal, this poignant tale explores a vital choice each of us must make: to seek safety in isolation or to embrace the painful yet beautiful complexities of life and love.

Tower of Strength Details

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Author : Annette Lyon

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From Reader Review Tower of Strength for online ebook

Nathan says

Really loved all 4 of her temple books but I especially liked this one. It has a lot more horse parts :) Great message of not judging, overcoming your fears and bearing one anothers burdens.

Dahlene says

A nice fluffy LDS story. It's pretty predictable, but a good book to take on a trip to read while in the airplane and car. The story takes place in Manti, UT, where I lived for 4 years after we were married. One the houses it describes sounds exactly like the one we rented for a couple years at the base of Manti Temple Hill. I need to write to the author and find out if she saw that house and added it to her story for a certain reason or if it was just a coincidence. I like historical fiction so I enjoyed it.

Alisha says

This book was a great LDS read. I loved it so much because it takes place in Manti Utah while they are building the Manti Temple...the temple where Evan and I were engaged and married. I love, love, loved it!!!

Laura says

This book was fast paced, and I loved that the Manti Temple was the backdrop for this story.

Amber says

Once again I found that this author has a few too many tragedies happen in the lives of her characters. But still not too bad for a 'fluff' LDS romance.

Kathryn says

widowed after only 2 months of marriage, tabitha's now expecting a baby and has no idea what to do. She has moved away from Manti in order to put some distance between her new mother-in-law who doesn't approve of her only son's choice in bride and now Tabitha feels responsible for her husbands death. She rises above the despair, goes to school, becomes a teacher and is supporting herself and son in Logan. She gets an offer to buy a paper back in manti and accepts with trepidation of going back and facing her past. She is stellar at keeping emotion and emotional love at bay until trouble starts at her paper, she buys a wild horse and she meets samuel a recent convert and widower too. Will she let the walls down and allow herself to

love with the possibility of hurt and loss again?

Heather says

I really enjoyed this book. The storyline was compelling, the characters well developed and believable. I definitely recommend it to anyone.

Rebecca Irvine says

To go along with my temple theme this month I have a treat for all my readers: a book review of Annette Lyon's newly released work *Tower of Strength*! *Tower* is the fourth in Annette's historical novel series about the early latter-day temples (previous volumes include one on the St. George temple, one on the Logan temple, and one on the Salt Lake temple that is also a retelling of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*).

The latter work was what initially drew me to Annette Lyon's books--my closest friends know I am a big Shakespeare fan and that I loved the film *Much Ado* (I even own the sound track). But after reading just one of her books I had to read more. So I was incredibly honored when Annette asked me to review her new book and be a stop on her blog tour.

But before I get too far, here is the description of *Tower of Strength* from the back of the book:

"It was 1877 when Tabitha Hall Chadwick left Manti as a young bride. Now, nearly seven years later, she returns as a widow with her young son to make a new beginning. Tabitha's strained relationship with her mother-in-law adds more difficulty to her life as a single working mother. Yet with a stroke of courage, Tabitha makes two purchases that become her passions: the local newspaper and a traumatized horse.

"As she struggles to meet the challenges of her new roles, Tabitha welcomes the friendship of Samuel, a recently widowed British immigrant. Working together to train the abused horse, the two discover a second chance at love. But when Samuel is critically injured during the construction of the Manti Temple, Tabitha faces the pain of old wounds and the risk of new ones.

"Weaving themes of loss and renewal, this poignant tale explores a vital choice each of us must make: to seek safety in isolation or to embrace the painful yet beautiful complexities of life and love."

Now on to the review. Overall, I thought *Tower of Strength* was my favorite of all of Annette's writings thus far. The plot is surprisingly relevant to modern day despite being historical. And the characters were well-rounded and likable. Details regarding the time period and the building of the Manti temple (i.e., the continual explosions to mine stone) were genuinely interesting without overwhelming the rest of the plot line.

One of the things I loved most about *Tower of Strength* was the emotional truthfulness I felt the main character, Tabitha, possessed. In the book Tabitha is widowed very early in her marriage and at a young age. The challenging impact this turn in her life brings lasts for years down the road as Tabitha tries to sort out her emotions and make the best of things. Some authors may have assumed seven years might have healed their main character after experiencing such a traumatic event. Annette Lyon does not make this assumption, but instead uses the lingering pain to add depth to the Tabitha's character and the overall plot.

Additionally, Tower of Strength uses some beautiful symbolism I thoroughly enjoyed. When you read it {and I know you will :-}, pay close attention to the symbolism of Mantia (Tabitha's horse). I can tell Annette put a lot of time, thought, and effort into the details of Mantia's character. Trying to catch all the symbolism was half the fun of reading the book.

Vicki says

This is an amazing book. I really enjoyed it and how strong Tabitha is. She has to learn to let others help, and when she does, all the barriers she has built up are able to go down. I would recommend it to anyone. It's a great addition to Annette's other books in the series!

Paula says

Ok, so here's the deal. Overall, I enjoyed reading this book.

It's old-fashioned in that there is a simple old-school values type of charm to the book. Think *Little House on the Prairie* --but Mormon. Think Hallmark Hall of Fame Sunday Night Movie. Think Oxygen Network.

While few women will admit that they partake of the wholesome entertainment I described above, most do. Including myself. I would watch this book as a Sunday Night Movie. So, for those of you who love to sap it up every once in a while, this book is for you.

I think the book could have been better if the Mormon overtones were omitted. I understand that is kind of the author's thing writing about the building of the various temples but it feels gimmicky--it adds only in a minor way, giving a literal reason to uphold Christian values. Neither does the temple--except to be a vehicle for a thread of the plot. I know the author had hoped to convey some of the history of the Mormon Church, but the book doesn't read as an Historical Fiction novel. It reads as a romance.

Despite some amateurish plot devices--most apparent the metaphor of the horse--the story is simple and sweet and romantic. It harkens back to a much more simple time that many of us would like to get back to. The author clearly upholds these values and it's good to see that these types of romances are still being written.

To the author, thank you for the signed copy from GoodReads First-Reads.

Tristi says

Utah Best of State medalist Annette Lyon adds another installment to her best-selling series which uses research and the question, "What if?" to create stories that revolve around the building of LDS temples in Utah. So far, she has featured the Logan temple, the St. George temple, the Salt Lake temple, and now with her release of "Tower of Strength," the Manti temple.

Tabitha Chadwick had been in love with Fred Hall for as long as she could remember. When she became old

enough to start courting, he told her he'd been waiting for her, and before long, they were married. Just two months later, a mining accident took his life, making her a widow at the start of a pregnancy. Wanting to leave her painful memories behind, and definitely wanting to get out from the baleful glare of her disapproving mother-in-law, Tabitha moved to Logan to attend Brigham Young College and find a way to provide for herself and her infant son.

Seven years have gone by, and Tabitha feels she's weathered her storm well, but then she gets a letter from a man she knew back home in Manti. He's retiring and wants her to buy out his newspaper business. Tabitha badly wants to do it, but fears what will happen. Will she be able to move forward, or will her memories keep her chained down? She wants her son to know his grandparents, and she loves the idea of running her own business, so she packs up and heads back to Manti, wondering if she's made the right choice.

Samuel Barnett is a recent convert to the Church whose dear wife died before they reached Utah, immigrating from England. He comes to Manti hoping to find a place for himself amongst the Saints, only to find his assignment in the stables completely out of his comfort zone. When an encounter with a beautiful widow named Tabitha puts him in the position of horse trainer, he has to confess he really knows nothing about animals at all, but the more he comes to know Tabitha, the more he likes what he sees.

They have so much in common, losing spouses young and wondering about their futures. But they also have in common the fear of failing again. We see them struggle with their internal baggage as they face this new relationship, and cheer them on as they realize they can't live in fear, but must face each day with faith, together.

Annette Lyon tells a story that is set against a historical backdrop without being too heavy on the historical details, instead letting them fall into place naturally. Readers who enjoy a well-crafted romance and a look at early Utah will appreciate this read.

Kami says

I absolutely loved the main character Tabitha. Although she admits to being weak when faced with the horrifying tragedy of being a young widow, she picks up the pieces and makes a life for herself and her son. She leaves her birth town and ventures to become all she can to build a new life. Upon receiving a business opportunity to return to her home town she is confronted with the pain of her past. She is tested within the business as she reports the facts with integrity. She is also tested with her love for a mistreated horse and the possibilities of a new love with a stranger.

Very well written and enjoyable story. I gave it four stars because in the beginning I thought the author over explained a little too much. I loved it though in the end and look forward to reading more from this author.

Julie says

Loved this book!

Laura says

This one has been on my to read list for a good, long time. Finally got to read it thanks to my local library. This is LDS historical fiction. The story is set in Manti, Utah during the years of the construction of the Manti Temple.

The tale centers around Tabitha Chadwick Hall, a young, single mother who, along with her young son, returns to her place of nativity after the death of her husband. Through her inheritance from her deceased mate, she is able to buy the local newspaper, but the paper's owner asks her to keep her purchase a secret. She works at the paper writing articles for it, but unable to take credit for her work.

Tabitha has determined that she needs to be a "tower of strength" for her son and cannot allow herself to share her burdens with those who love and care about her. The reason for that attitude is she sees that need to share, a sign of weakness and not a desirable situation. Enter one charming, widowed British immigrant, one Samuel Barnett, who manages to penetrate Tabitha's walls and does it with such patience and humor.

Really, a very enjoyable read. Well done, Ms. Lyon.

Reagan says

I enjoyed this book more than I thought I would. Yes, it has Mormon themes but it isn't as preachy and cliché as other "Mormon books." The plot was well thought out and executed. I really liked Tabitha, the main character. I thought she was a smart, strong, upstanding woman. The same can be said for Samuel, although I would've liked to see more of his development.

This is a great, feel-good book that isn't too deep, but isn't outrageously superfluous, either. I really liked it. I will probably end up reading the other temple books in Annette Lyon's series eventually. This one was really good. I also loved the historical portion about the actual Manti temple.
